

Kent Historic Towns Survey

HEADCORN

Archaeological Assessment Document

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KENT HISTORIC TOWNS' SURVEY

**HEADCORN - KENT
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
DOCUMENT**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Headcorn, 13km south-east of Maidstone, 17km west of Ashford and 11km north of Tenterden, is a small market town based on a settlement of possible pre- or early Norman origin, situated at the meeting place of several early routes into the Weald and at the crossing of the Beult and Sherway rivers. In the nineteenth century a new road from Maidstone to Rye via Headcorn and Tenterden (A274) for the first time put the town on a main through route.

This study aims to provide an evaluation of the archaeological and historical remains of the settlement as a basis for informing decision-making in the planning process where archaeological deposits may be affected by development proposals. The Kent County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) was checked for information relating to the study area defined for Headcorn (see below) and provided 19 entries: 13 relating to standing buildings and modern structures, one of prehistoric date, four medieval moated farmsteads and one from the post-medieval period. Headcorn is fairly typical of many small towns in England in that there has, as yet, been no significant archaeological research within the town, or in the area of study. Thus most of the history has been compiled from documentary evidence and secondary published sources.

Most of the currently visible standing buildings date from the seventeenth century and later, although there are structures surviving from earlier periods. The town is seen as historically significant because of its built environment and the existence of some documentary evidence, rather than because of any well-known archaeological deposits in the area.

1.2 Situation

Headcorn (NGR TQ 833442) is situated at 20m OD in the Low Weald, to the north of the river Beult (Figure 1). It stands on a bed of Weald clay with alluvium around the rivers Beult and Sherway and their tributaries, and beds of river gravels (Figure 2).

1.3 Study area

The general area for study selected lies between TQ 820430 and TQ 850460. More in-depth study, focusing on the evolution of the settlement and its historical components, is centred on the historic core of the town between TQ 830440 and TQ 840445.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

Very few archaeological data exist for Headcorn or its immediate environs, and no archaeological work has been undertaken in the area of study, although just outside it there was limited trial trenching on Moatenden Priory in 1992 and watching briefs were carried out to the north and west of the town in 1995 and 1999 respectively (pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge). The Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for the area of study records the following evidence.

2.1 Prehistoric

TQ 84 SW 7 - A neolithic polished flint axe was found in the bed of a stream in Headcorn parish at c. TQ 833444, in 1935 (Maidstone Museum Archaeological Gazetteer).

TQ 84 SW 30 – A bronze palstave with signs of wear along the edges of the blades and varying degrees of corrosion was found in 1994 during a metal detector search at New House Farm, Headcorn, at TQ 832432. It is attributed to the middle bronze age (Aldridge 1997a).

2.2 Romano-British

TQ 84 SW 31 - Evidence for a Romano-British farmstead was found by fieldwalking in 1993 at New House Farm, Headcorn, at TQ 832432 (pers comm. N. R. Aldridge).

2.3 Medieval

TQ 84 NW 23 - The possible remains of a medieval moated site is suggested north-west of Witherden Farm, at TQ 842454 (Tatton-Brown 1978, 282)

TQ 84 SW 4 - 120m east of Brook Wood Farm (TQ 82754314) a well-preserved, water-filled, rectangular homestead-moat was totally destroyed in the 1980s. It had a wide causeway midway along the western side, and the whole area measured 64m north-south by 26m east-west. There were no traces of building foundations (Tatton-Brown 1977, 221; pers. comm.. N. R. Aldridge)).

TQ 84 SW 5 – Remains of a probable medieval watermill and mill pond at Moat Farm (TQ 83054435). An artificially widened stretch of a stream forms the northern arm, while the western arm has been incorporated into a large pond. The construction of the road from Headcorn to Staplehurst has destroyed all traces of the south side, and the east side has been filled in, leaving no trace (Tatton-Brown 1977, 221; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

TQ 84 SW 9 - A suggested medieval moated site has been identified at Bletchenden, south-west of Headcorn at TQ 838431 (Tatton-Brown 1978, 282).

TQ 84 SW 32 – A probably thirteenth century lead seal-matrix was found by metal detector in 1994 c. 400m north of a prominent isolated hill in the south of Headcorn parish, at TQ 83054275. A little to the west is the site of the destroyed homestead-moated of Brookwood Farm TQ 84 SW 4, from which it probably derived (Aldridge 1997b).

2.4 Post-medieval

TQ 84 NW 50 - South of Tilden Farm, a series of ponds (or possibly marl pits) perhaps marking the site of a former Bethersden marble quarry, at TQ 83654500. Scatters of waste stone have been seen in an adjacent field (Bannister 1993; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

3 HISTORICAL RECORDS

3.1 Early charters

The earliest written record for Headcorn's environs is from AD 791, when King Offa granted *suith helming daen* (Little Southernden) to Christ Church, Canterbury (Sawyer 1968, charter no. 123).

3.2 Domesday Book

Headcorn does not appear in Domesday Book.

3.3 Origin of place name

The place name *Hedekaruna* is thought to derive from the Old English *Hydecan Kruna*, the personal name *Hydeca* and *karuna*, fallen trees, or debris. This may relate to Headcorn's situation in what once was the Wealden forest of *Andredsweald*, and the initial clearance. The name can be traced to its present day form thus:

OE <i>Hydecan Kruna</i>	---	<i>c.</i> 1100 <i>Hedekaruna</i>
1240 <i>Hedecrune</i>	---	1248 <i>Hedecrone</i>
1610 <i>Hedcorne</i>	---	present day Headcorn

4 HISTORICAL DATA BY PERIOD

4.1 Pre-urban evidence

4.1.1 The Saxon period

Headcorn originated as a den (area of cleared land for pasture) at a point where a number of routes from North Kent to the Weald converged and also crossed the rivers Beult and Sherway. The settlement seems to have grown up *c.* 0.75km upstream of one river crossing, and a church was probably founded there by the middle of the eleventh century.

4.2 Urban evidence

4.2.1 The medieval Period:

4.2.1.1 Markets and fairs

The first evidence for fairs and markets in Headcorn is Henry III's grant of 1249/1250 whereby the lord of the manor of Headcorn acquired the right to hold a weekly Thursday market and an annual fair on the eve, day and morrow of the Apostles Peter and Paul (28th - 30th June). At the same time the priory at Mottenden (*Motynden*) *c.* 2.5km north of Headcorn, gained the rights to an annual fair for eight days, (roughly from 29th May to 6th June), and until the Dissolution the friars held a solemn procession through Headcorn village each Trinity Sunday, in connection with the fair.

The position of the first market in Headcorn was very probably situated in a triangular area immediately east of the church and churchyard, at the crossing of north – south and east – west routes. What is now Church Walk was once a continuation of the present High Street and an integral part of the market place.

4.2.1.2 The manor

By 1279/80, the archbishop of Canterbury and the master of the Maison Dieu at Ospringe are recorded as being lords of the parish of Headcorn. In the early fourteenth century Adam de Rishford leased the manor from the master of the Maison Dieu. After 1347 it was held by John de Peende whose descendents maintained it until the early seventeenth century.

The manor house (still known as Rushford Manor) stood at the east end of the High Street. A building west of the church, once called Headcorn Manor and later known as the Old Vicarage. This building was neither the manor house of Headcorn nor a vicarage, but a high status yeoman's hall-house (pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

4.2.1.3 The church

The parish church of Headcorn is dedicated to SS Peter and Paul. Although not mentioned in the Domesday Survey, the church of *Hedekaruna* is recorded in the roughly contemporary Domesday Monachorum; it was then subordinate to its mother church at Maidstone.

The church is next mentioned in 1240 when Henry III granted it to the hospital of St Mary at Ospringe. In 1482/83 the hospital's possessions, including the church, were returned to the Crown and in 1515/16 they were granted to St John's College, Cambridge which still holds them.

The earliest remains in Headcorn church are the north and east walls of the chancel, thought to mark the site of the nave of the eleventh century building. The present Lady Chapel probably stands where the twelfth century south aisle lay and the single pillar from which spring the two arches separating the Lady Chapel from the chancel may be part of the twelfth century church. A new nave, much shorter than the present one, was built in the thirteenth century and lengthened during the fourteenth century. The south aisle, south porch and tower were added in the late fourteenth century and there were other alterations during the fifteenth century.

4.2.1.4 Other religious organisations

Moatenden priory

Although falling outside the area of study, Moatenden manor, about 2.7km north-west of the town, must be mentioned. The manor was founded in the twelfth century, and in 1224 Robert de Rokesley donated land for the foundation of a house of Trinitarian friars there.

When the priory was dissolved in 1536 the annual value of its possessions was only £60 13s 1½d. In 1538 Henry VIII granted the manor of Moatenden to Sir Thomas Cromwell but it returned to the Crown in 1540. Most of the priory buildings were demolished but a few fragments of the original building survive in a moated house now called Moatenden Priory. The site of the priory's post-mill is still just visible as a mound nearby, and other signs of the monastic enclosure survive to the east, west and south (pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

In 1992, a geophysical survey and limited trial trenching in the orchard east of the house confirmed the site of the priory church, the north cloister walk to its south and a stone culvert (pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

4.2.1.5 Industry and trade

Cloth making

When a weaving industry grew up in Headcorn during the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) the town entered into a period of prosperity, which lasted until the end of the fifteenth century.

As the industry grew, cloth halls were built by the master clothiers. These halls, often built after the Flemish style with their gable ends towards the street, are found in many cloth-making towns, combining the functions of private house, office and warehouse. Two survive in Headcorn. One is The Cloth Hall, North Street, a late sixteenth century timber-framed building, set at right angles to Church Walk. The other, Shakespeare House on the south side of the High Street, is also of sixteenth century date and set at right angles to the street. Some private residences for cloth merchants were also built, for example, the surviving Tallow House (formerly Streete House), 26 High Street and Chequers, 22 High Street.

4.2.1.6 Communications

Rivers

The main river is the Beult which flows from east to west just south of the town, meeting the river Medway at Yalding to the west. It has three tributaries: the river Sherway; the Hammer stream; and School stream. The name Beult means 'swollen belly', probably a reference to its frequently breaking its banks.

Bridges

In the medieval period there were at least six bridges across the rivers around Headcorn and some may be of even more ancient origin. Only one is recent.

Stephen's bridge is built of stone, with two fine arches, and is named after Archbishop Stephen Langton who reputedly had it built in the early thirteenth century. Pell bridge, now a footbridge but once a packhorse bridge, is now approached by a stone footpath, running from the south porch of the church, and was once the main route to Cranbrook. The early bridge was built of wood and, although now replaced by a concrete and metal structure, the original piers can still be seen when the level of the Beult is low. Place Farm bridge south-west of the town, contains traces of medieval work and the remains of an earlier bridge lie in the river bed.

Other possibly early bridges, but now displaying no medieval fabric, include Hogg's bridge across the School stream and New Bridge, totally rebuilt in 1815. Frank's bridge across the river Sherway was built in 1842 when the road south had to be realigned when the railway line was laid (pers. comm.. N. R. Aldridge).

4.2.2 *The post-medieval period*

4.2.2.1 Markets and fairs

Headcorn's market seems not to have survived into the post-medieval period, perhaps because of increasing competition from other towns in the area, but the fair continued and at the end of the eighteenth century it was held on June 12th. By the second half of the nineteenth century the fair, then called the Leanstock Fair, was causing concern because of the bad behaviour of many attending it, and both the fair and the local hostelry The Queen Adelaide (now Shakespeare House) were closed down.

4.2.2.2 The manor

The manor changed hands many times between 1611 and 1783, and by c. 1800 it was held by a Captain John Wade.

4.2.2.3 The church

By 1500 the church building was much as it is today, although some restoration work was carried out in 1854-55 and 1868, culminating in a major restoration programme in 1877-78 by G M Hills. The church bells are first mentioned in 1638, by 1720 there were seven bells and in 1766 the number was increased to eight.

4.2.2.4 Industry and trade

Agriculture

By the beginning of the post-medieval period, the economy of Headcorn was based on arable farming and stockbreeding. Fruit and hop growing became more important in the eighteenth

and nineteenth century, but in the twentieth century such mixed farming was replaced by predominantly arable land-usage.

Mills

Headcorn had two windmills for grinding grain. Both stood on slightly higher ground 400m to the north-west of the church. The oldest, The Black Mill, so-called because it had been tarred instead of painted, was a smock windmill, dating from 1786, on what is now called Black Mill Farm. Its sweeps were removed in 1900 and it was demolished in 1910. The White Mill, so called because it had always been painted white, was erected on Mill Bank c. 1814. It was also a smock mill and worked up to c. 1916. It was demolished in 1952.

Forges

The Old Forge at the junction of Ulcombe Road and Lenham Road is thought to have been a forge since sometime during the eighteenth century, although the earliest surviving records date from 1823, when the forge and two houses were sold. The forge was demolished in 1965. In the nineteenth century the blacksmith had worked in conjunction with a wheelwright's shop in King's Road. Another forge, in Forge Lane, had two furnaces and continued to operate until 1932.

Inns

There were several inns in the town by the late eighteenth century. The George Inn and the King's Arms stood on the north side of the High Street. The Queen Adelaide (now Shakespeare House) stood on the south side overlooking the village green and was originally a cloth hall. After the decline of the cloth trade it became a hostelry and continued as such until being closed for rowdiness at the end of the nineteenth century. The Ball and Chequers next to the Queen Adelaide was originally a domestic hall-house in the sixteenth century, and probably connected with the cloth trade; it was converted and used as an inn until being divided into cottages in the 1920s. The Old Black Horse Inn on the south side of Wheeler Street was demolished c. 1920, and The Railway Hotel in Station Road; built just after the railway came to Headcorn, was demolished in 1982.

4.2.2.5 The railway

The railway

The railway came to Headcorn when the South Eastern Railway Company's Redhill to Ashford line was completed in December 1842. In 1905, the Kent and East Sussex Railway opened a branch line from Tenterden to Headcorn, but it was unprofitable and closed in 1954.

4.2.3 The modern town

Headcorn has remained a fairly small settlement, more of a village than a town, as it has not experienced the growth of other market towns such as Ashford and Sevenoaks. Its centre still contains a range of fine houses, many dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. There has been some building away from the centre and, where there has, it is largely of late nineteenth and twentieth century date. Whilst there has been a certain amount of urban growth during the twentieth century, it has not swamped the village nor destroyed its character. The lack of major development can be seen by comparing the maps on Figures 3 – 7.

Today, the town's workforce is largely made up of commuters to London and other local towns but its rural surroundings remain mainly agricultural with many farms.

4.2.4 Population

The population of Headcorn town in the 1560s was *c.*600 and by the first national census in 1801 it had increased to 740. By 1821 there were 1,191 inhabitants but in 1831 there were only 1,193; it probably stagnated because of the emigration of agricultural labourers and their families from Kentish towns to the Dominions and America. Thereafter the local population grew steadily, but there was no big surge as seen in many other towns. By 1955, for instance, the population was just over 1,800, but by the 1991 census, the population of the parish as a whole had risen to 3,073. Headcorn remains a largely agrarian community, with little or no industry. Some inhabitants commute to neighbouring towns.

5 URBAN CHARACTERISTICS

The following summary of the principal urban characteristics in Headcorn has been divided into those of the medieval and post-medieval periods (pre- and post-dating *c.* 1540). The summary is not comprehensive, most nineteenth century maps giving details of additional features. The Ordnance Surveyors' field drawing of 1800 is taken as the basis for the historic town plan. This has been chosen because it reflects the town in its pre-industrial and pre-railway phase, that is, the period before nineteenth and twentieth century development, although very slight in the case of Headcorn, changed the medieval urban layout.

5.1 Medieval plan components and urban features (Figures 7 and 8)

The original centre of Headcorn was probably made up of the church and churchyard (PC1), the area of tenements to its north (PC 7), and the market place to the east (PC2), all having grown up around the meeting place of early trackways (PC 12 and PC13) and a river crossing (PC 14). The High Street (PC9) originally included present day Church Walk along the north wall of the churchyard to meet the packhorse track to Cranbrook (PC10), and to the east it was flanked by the manor house (PC3 and PC4) and four groups of possible tenement plots (PC5-8). When the new road to Maidstone was built in 1815 the High Street was realigned where it met the east end of the churchyard to form North Street (PC11). There were several bridges at river crossings around the town.

The early plan form of Headcorn seems relatively simple, comprising the principal elements of the church, the market, the manor house, tenement plots, land routes and bridges. The chronological evolution of the plan form, however, is less clear.

PC1. The Parish Church of SS Peter and Paul and its Churchyard.

- a) (MUF1) The parish church of SS Peter and Paul and its surrounding churchyard. The fabric of the church dates from *c.* 1100 to the fifteenth century (DoE 1986, 15-16).

PC1A. Area of possible dual use as market and churchyard.

PC2. The medieval Market Place.

- PC3.** Probable site of the medieval Manor House and associated land on the south side of the High Street.
- PC4.** Site of manorial land holdings on the north side of the High Street.
- a) (MUF2) Woodcocks, 71-73 High Street. Originally a sixteenth century or earlier barn, converted into a house in the eighteenth century, with nineteenth and twentieth century alterations (DoE 1986, 37; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- PC5.** A possible group of tenement plots fronting the north side of the High Street and on to Forge Lane.
- a) (MUF3) 1-5 Forge Lane, The Forge and Spring Cottage. Once one house, now two houses. Built in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century with nineteenth and twentieth century alterations (DoE 1986, 26).
- PC6.** A possible group of tenement plots fronting the north side of the High Street.
- a) (MUF 4) 5-7 High Street. A shop and dwelling built as a small hall-house *c.* 1440, with eighteenth and nineteenth century alterations and additions. Badly damaged by fire *c.* 1998 and rebuilt as The Bathroom Shop and Marino's Fish Bar. (DoE 1986, 32; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- b) (MUF12) 23-25 High Street. High status house built *c.* 1470-1510, timber-framed building with jetty, now three shops: Country Lady, Lady Mop and Hawkes. (pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- d) (MUF13) 35 High Street. Fifteenth century building in middle of a row of later shops (DoE 1986, 34; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- PC7.** Group of tenement plots fronting the north side of Church Walk (the old main street), North Street and northwards to Moat Road, probably original centre of settlement.
- a) (MUF5) 1-4 Church Walk. Originally a cloth hall, now shops and three dwellings, built in the late sixteenth century, with seventeenth-, nineteenth and twentieth century alterations (DoE 1986, 45; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- c) (MUF6) 11-13 Church Walk. Fifteenth century hall-house, now three dwellings, with nineteenth and twentieth century alterations (DoE 1986, 23; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge)
- b) (MUF7) 9-10 Church Walk. Hall-house, built in the fifteenth century or possibly earlier (DoE 1986, 23; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- PC8.** A possible group of tenement plots fronting the south side of the High Street and Market Place.

- a) (MUF8) Shakespeare House, 18 High Street. Probably once a cloth hall, subsequently a hostelry, the Queen Adelaide, now a house. Built in the sixteenth century and restored in the twentieth century (DoE 1986, 38)
- b) (MUF9) Chequers, 22 High Street. Timber-framed hall-house with a later west wing. Built 1480-1500, restored in the 1980s (DoE 1986, 38; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

PC9. The High Street.

PC10. Packhorse track to Cranbrook.

PC11. North Street.

PC12. Line of early north – south route, possibly running around medieval fields.

PC13. Line of early east – west route, from Faversham to the river crossing.

PC14. Pell Bridge. Medieval packhorse bridge.

PC15. Land around high status yeoman’s hall.

- a) (MUF10) House called Headcorn Manor (but this is a misnomer). Built *c.* 1480 and restored in the twentieth century. It is a Wealden hall-house in plan with a double-bay hall (DoE 1986, 321; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

Not located in a plan component

(MUF11) The Moat, once a farmhouse, now a house. Built in the early to mid sixteenth century, with an eighteenth/ nineteenth century rear wing to the left. The house was restored in the 1960s (DoE 1986, 43).

(MUF14) House row, formerly a barn, built in the early fifteenth century with alterations in the 1980s (DoE 1986, 57).

5.2 Post-medieval plan components and urban features (Figure 9)

During the seventeenth and particularly the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many new buildings were constructed along the line of the High Street, replacing numerous earlier structures and infilling spaces. Many of the older buildings underwent alterations, both to their structure and their use, particularly after the coming of the railway in 1842 when there was a significant move towards improvements to the town. During the late nineteenth and twentieth century the suburbs beyond the centre gradually expanded to the north of the railway and the river; former fields were built over with houses to accommodate a growing population. This growth, however, was limited and Headcorn was able to retain much of its character and style. No post-medieval plan components map has therefore been produced.

PC1. The Parish Church of SS Peter and Paul and its Churchyard.

- a) (PMUF1) The parish church of SS. Peter and Paul and the surrounding churchyard. The churchyard contains a variety of funerary monuments dating from the early eighteenth century; the church was twice restored in the nineteenth century (DoE 1986, 17-18).

PC2. The Market Place.

PC3. Site of Manor House and associated land on the south side of the High Street.

- a) (PMUF2) Home Farmhouse, 38 High Street. An early eighteenth century facade with mathematical tiles, on a possibly earlier building (DoE 1986, 40; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- b) (PMUF3) Rushford Manor, 40 High Street. A house with a late eighteenth century facade to a possible sixteenth century building. The original manor of Headcorn (DoE 1986, 41; *Headcorn Local History Society* 1987, 22; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

PC4. Site of manorial land holdings on the north side of the High Street.

- a) (PMUF4) The Manse, built in the early nineteenth century for the Baptist minister (DoE 1986, 48).
- b) (PMUF5) Baptist Chapel, built in 1819 (DoE 1986, 47).
- c) (PMUF6) Mulberry Cottage, 69 High Street. Once three cottages, now one house, built in the early nineteenth century and now forming part of the manorial holdings (DoE 1986, 36; *Headcorn Local History Society* 1987, 22; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

PC5. Group of tenement plots fronting the north side of the High Street and on to Forge Lane.

- a) (PMUF7) 53-57 High Street. Built in the seventeenth century with later alterations and nineteenth century additions to the rear (DoE 1986, 36; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- b) (PMUF8) 43-51 High Street. Five shops, built in the mid-nineteenth century (DoE 1986, 35; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- c) (PMUF9) Krishna Indian Restaurant, 41 High Street. Built in the sixteenth century and later. Now shop, restaurant and dwelling (DoE 1986, 35; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- d) (PMUF10) 31-39 High Street. Shop row, all except No. 35 dating from the sixteenth century (DoE 1986, 34; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

- e) (PMUF16) George Inn, 29 High Street. Built in late nineteenth century on site of old George Inn, which was similar to adjoining 31-33 High Street (pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

PC6. Group of tenement plots fronting the north side of the High Street.

- a) (PMUF11) 27 High Street. Shop built in the late nineteenth century as Chaplin's store. Now Homes & Gardens store (DoE 1986, 34; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

(PMUF12) 15-19 High Street. House row built in mid-nineteenth century (DoE 1986, 33; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

- c) (PMUF13) The Institute, 9 -11 High Street. Dated 1866 (DoE 1986, 33).
- d) (PMUF14) The King's Arms Inn, 1 High Street. Built in the seventeenth century or earlier with nineteenth century alterations (DoE 1986, 32; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

PC7. Group of tenement plots fronting the north side of Church Walk and North Street and northwards to Moat Road.

- a) (PMUF15) Weavers, Bless and Petite Cottages, 5-7 Church Walk. A house row with a nineteenth century facade, although the building may be seventeenth century, with a late eighteenth/ early nineteenth century addition and twentieth century alterations (DoE 1986, 22; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

PC8. Group of tenement plots fronting the south side of the High Street and Market.

- a) (PMUF17) 12-16 High Street. House row dating from the seventeenth century (DoE 1986, 37).
- b) (PMUF18) 24 High Street, The Old Vicarage, now a house. Built in 1787 by Rev David Evans. Nineteenth century alterations and additions to the west (DoE 1986, 39; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).
- c) (PMUF19) 26-28 High Street, Tallow House and Post Office. Built in the sixteenth century, with nineteenth century alterations and additions (DoE 1986, 39; pers. comm. N. R. Aldridge).

6 THE POTENTIAL OF HEADCORN

6.1 Archaeological resource overview

No archaeological investigations have so far been undertaken within the town or its surroundings. Thus little is known about the extent of surviving archaeological sub-surface deposits. There is a good possibility that some sub-surface archaeological deposits may have survived in those areas that have not been cellared, although the medieval stratigraphy may be comparatively thin and not far below the present ground surface. If surviving areas of intact medieval and earlier stratigraphy can be located they could help to establish the evolution and development of the market town.

6.2 Research questions

The purpose of this document is to develop policy for Headcorn's urban archaeological deposits, particularly the historic core. None of the medieval and post-medieval components of the town have been archaeologically investigated and there is virtually no archaeological evidence for the medieval economic base of the town.

6.3 Key areas for research

6.3.1 The origins of Headcorn

The following need to be investigated

- The nature, date and extent of the earliest settlement remains at Headcorn
- The earliest remains which can be classed as urban or proto-urban
- The site, origins and development of the early trackways
- The site, origins and development of the early river crossings
- The site and origins of the church
- The site, origin and development of the manor
- The site and origins of the market

6.3.2 Headcorn in the medieval period

The following need to be investigated

- The site and development of the market and fairs
- The development of Rushford Manor on the High Street
- The development of the church and churchyard
- The pattern of settlement and the relationship of individual plots to the settlement framework
- The nature, extent and chronology of occupation within the urban core
- The form and character of individual properties
- The economic basis of the town and industries

6.3.3 Headcorn in the post-medieval period

The following need to be investigated

- The decline of the market and development of the fair
- The pattern of settlement and the relationship of individual plots to the settlement framework
- The nature, extent and chronology of occupation within the urban core
- The form and character of individual properties
- The economic basis of the town and its industries

6.3.4 General questions

- The evidence of artefactual remains in interpreting Headcorn's pre-urban and urban role
- The palaeo-environmental history of the town

The discovery and study of both structures and artefacts would illuminate these topics. Small-scale archaeological sampling in individual properties in Headcorn could provide answers to specific questions. Consideration should be given, however, to large-scale excavation over a number of adjacent properties, which would provide a wider picture, if desk-top assessment and field evaluation demonstrate the case. The position and importance of Headcorn in the

hierarchy of Kent towns can be solved only through excavation, field survey and consultation of historical documentation.

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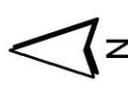
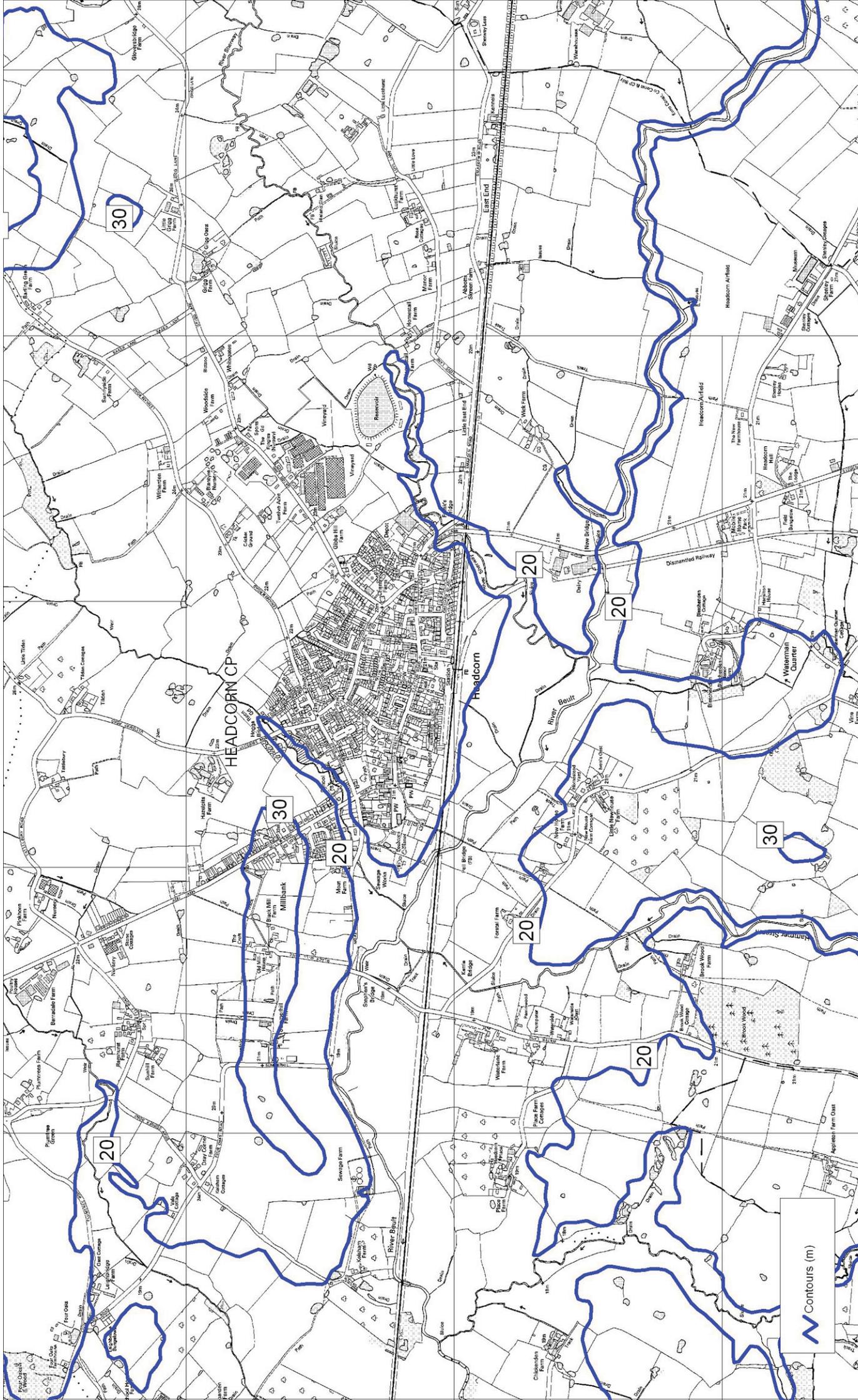


Figure 1. Map of Headcorn showing contours

1:14434

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Legend	
	Drift Geology
	Landfill
	No dirt
	Blown sand
	Marine Beach / Tidal Flats
	Stem Gravel Beach Deposits
	Marene (E Blaines) Alluvium
	Clay (Sand, Silt & Gravel)
	Calcareous Tufa
	Alluvium
	Dry Valley & Nalbourne Deposits
	Peat
	Blacksand
	Unroofed Hoop River Gravel
	1st Terrace River Gravel
	2nd Terrace River Gravel
	3rd Terrace River Gravel
	4th Terrace River Gravel
	5th Terrace River Gravel
	1st/2nd Terrace River Gravel
	2nd/3rd Terrace River Gravel
	4th/5th Terrace River Gravel
	Tallow Gravel
	Roper Hill Gravel
	Head
	Coarse Deposits
	Head Blackwash (Older)
	Head Blackwash 1st Terrace
	Head Gravel
	Pileas Gravel
	Clay-with-Fints
	Sand in Clay-with-Fints
	Disturbed Blackwash Beds
	Solid Geology
	Cylene Iron Weald Clay
	Ardleigh Sandstone
	Ashdown Beds
	Aberfeld Clay
	Bagnall Beds
	Blackwash beds
	Dulwich Beds
	Clay & Lint in Weald Clay
	Clay Ironstone Weald Clay
	Clay in Tun Wells Sand
	Chyngate Beds
	Cuckfield Stone
	Folkestone Beds
	Gault
	Gonistead Clay
	Hastings beds
	Hole Beds
	Ironstone Weald of Clay
	Large Full Lin Weald clay
	Leman Beds
	London Clay
	Lower Chalk (Oauonic) m.s.l
	Lower Gonistead Clay
	Lower Tun Wells Sand
	Mebroom rock
	Middle Chalk
	No dirt or sand
	Sand in Weald Clay
	Sand in head clay
	Singapore Beds
	Small Full Lin Weald clay
	Thicket Beds Brunel beds
	Tunbridge Wells Sand
	Upper Chalk
	Upper Greensand
	Upper Gonistead Clay
	Upper Tun Wells Sand
	Weald Clay
	Woodhead beds

Scale 1:1500 Figure 2 Map of Headcorn showing geology

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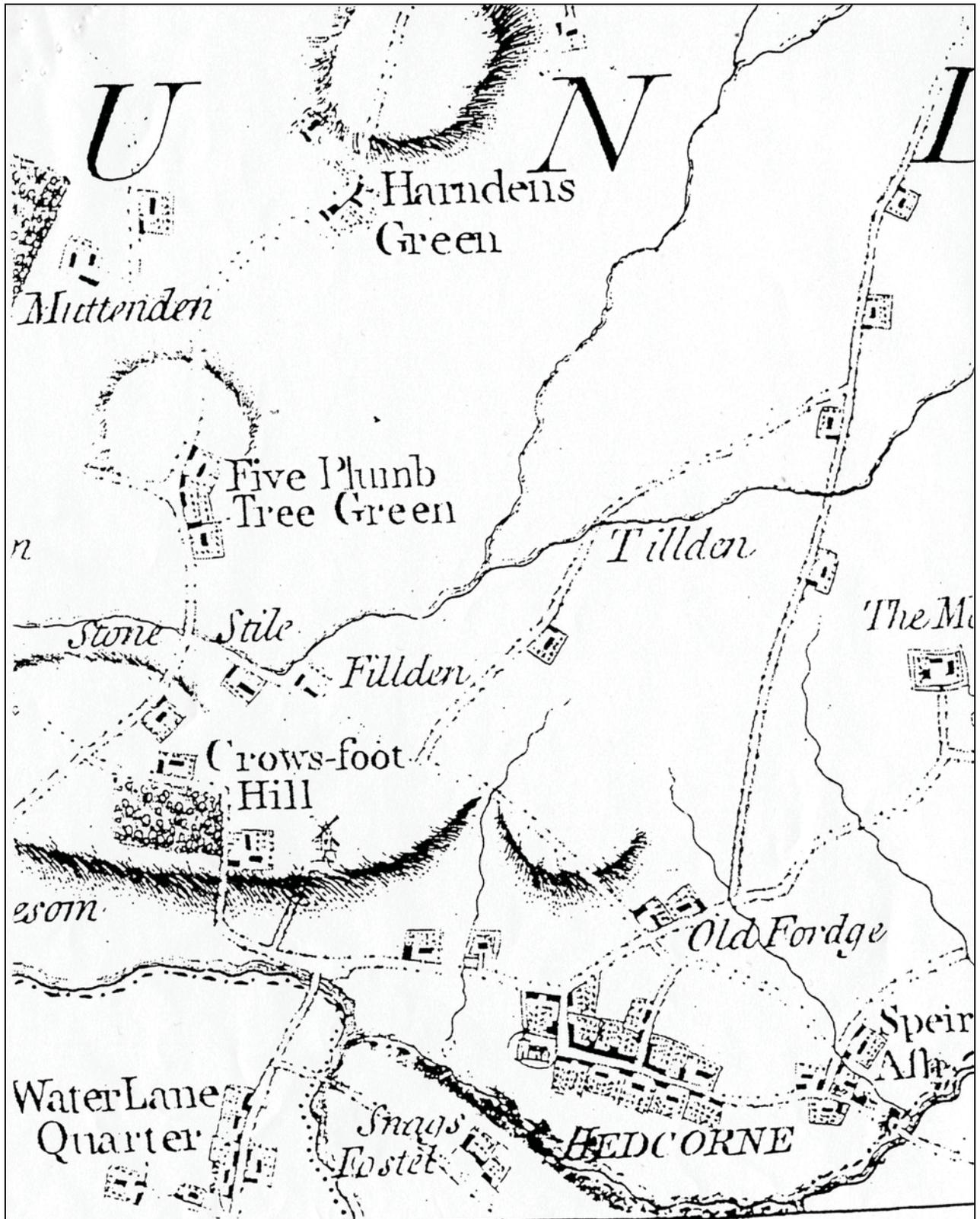


Figure 3. Andrews, Dury and Herbert's map of Headcorn, c. 1798

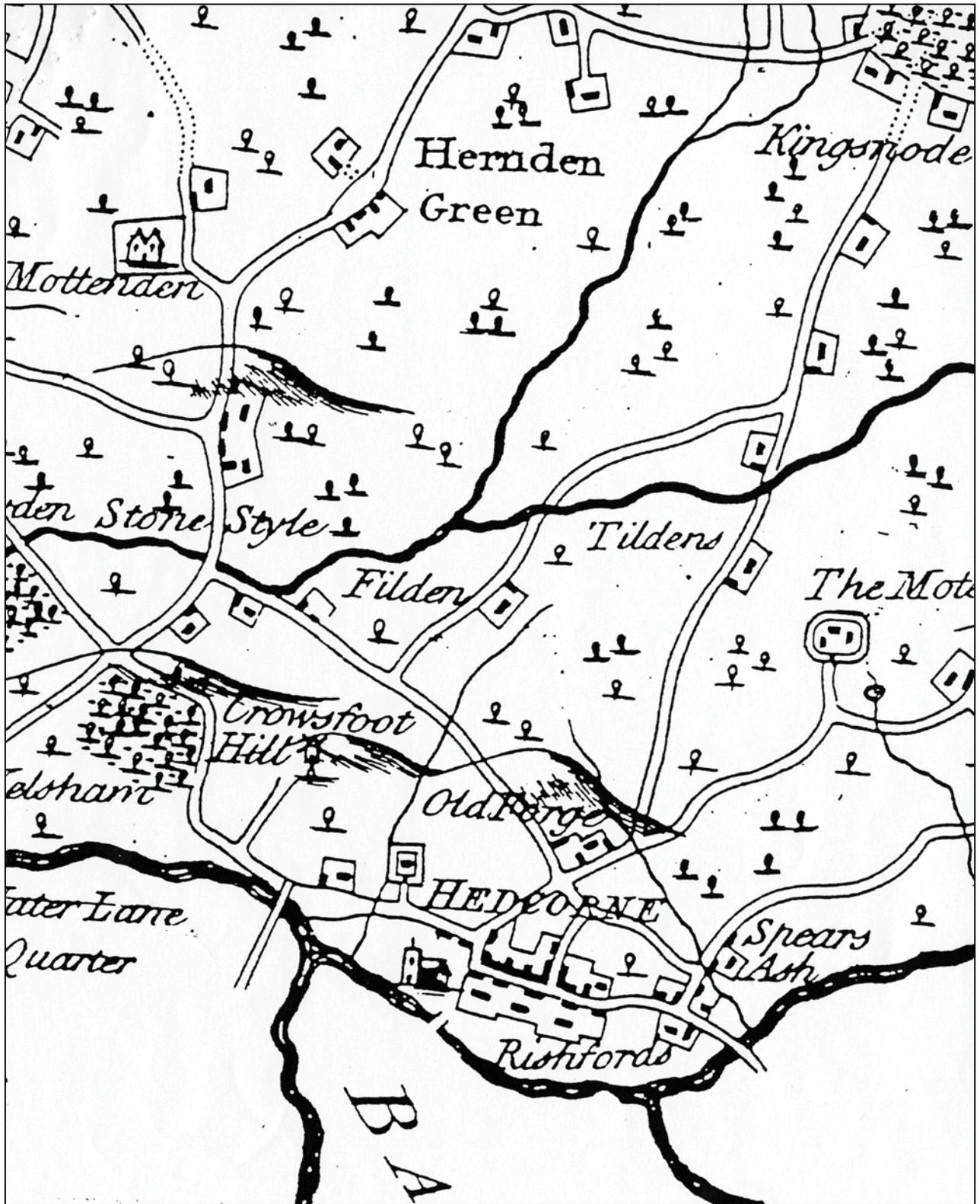


Figure 4. Hasted's map of Headcorn, c.1798

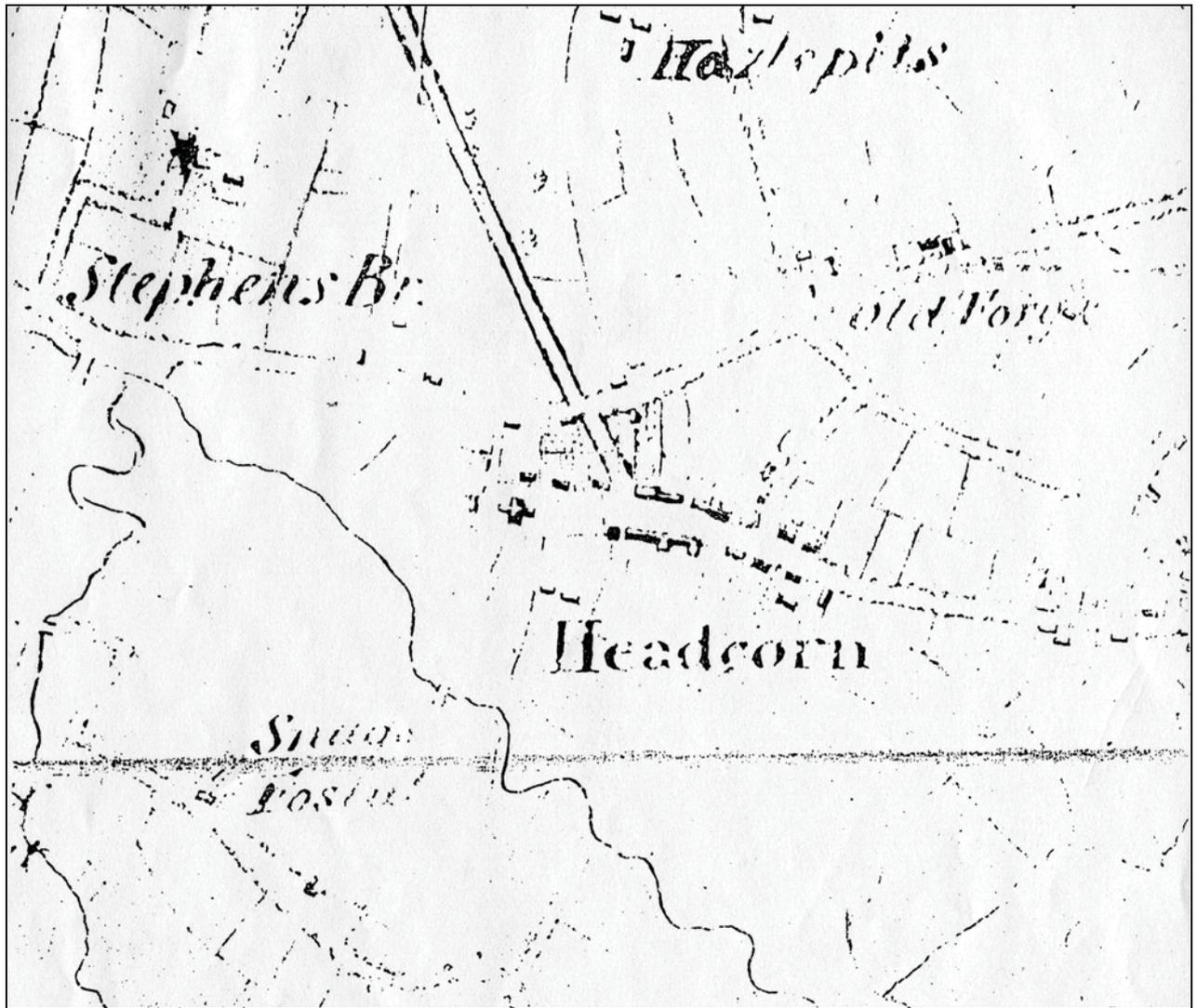


Figure 5. Ordnance Surveyor's field drawing for 1st Edition OS maps, c.1800

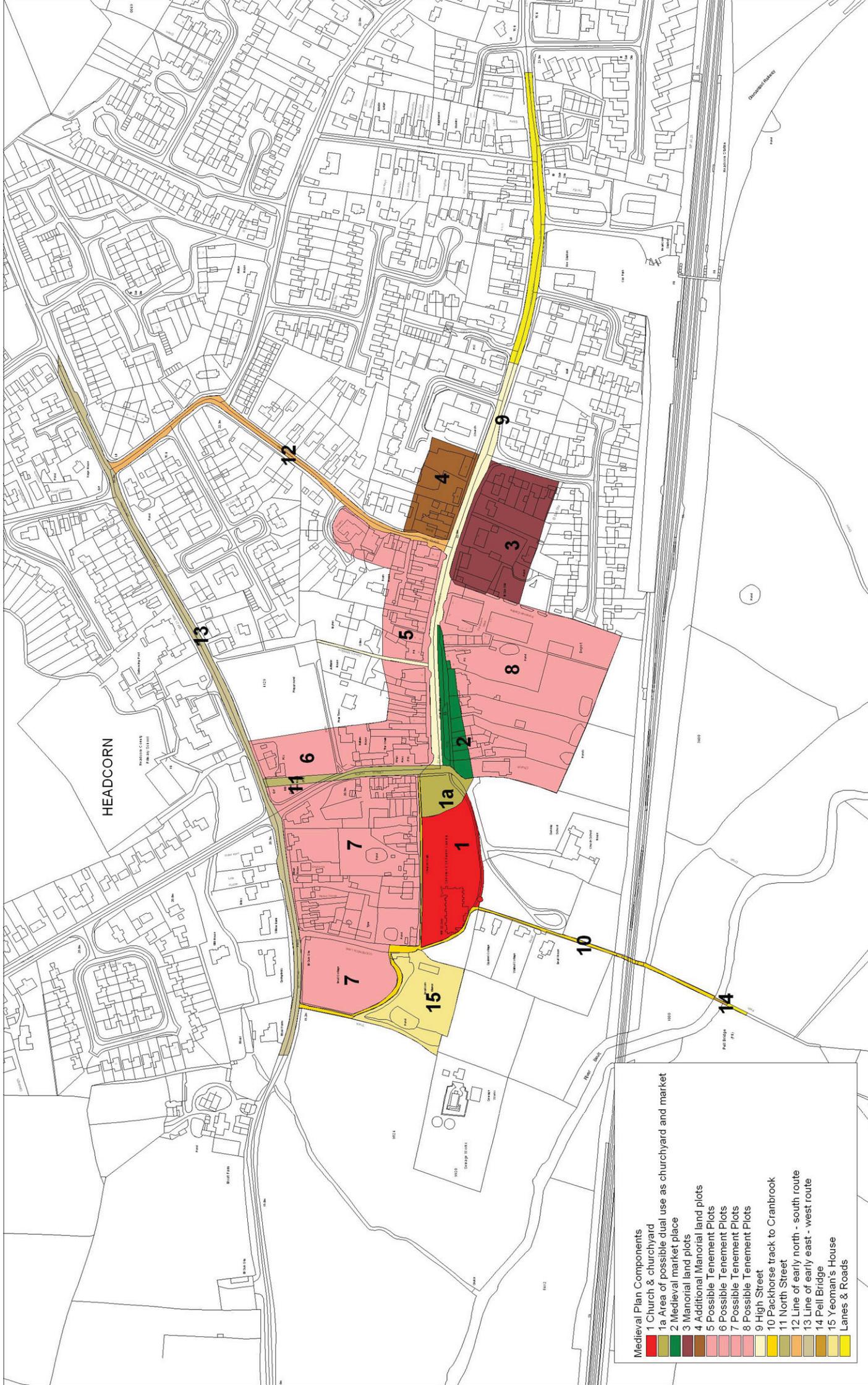


1:2223

Figure 6. Map of Headcorn showing historic buildings

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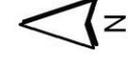


- Medieval Plan Components**
- 1 Church & churchyard
 - 1a Area of possible dual use as churchyard and market
 - 2 Medieval market place
 - 3 Manorial land plots
 - 4 Additional Manorial land plots
 - 5 Possible Tenement Plots
 - 6 Possible Tenement Plots
 - 7 Possible Tenement Plots
 - 8 Possible Tenement Plots
 - 9 High Street
 - 10 Packhorse track to Cranbrook
 - 11 North Street
 - 12 Line of early north - south route
 - 13 Line of early east - west route
 - 14 Pell Bridge
 - 15 Yeoman's House
 - Lanes & Roads

1:3520

Figure 7. Map of Headcorn showing medieval plan components

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● Medieval Urban Features

HEADCORN

Figure 8. Map of Headcorn showing medieval urban features

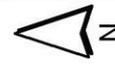




Figure 9. Map of Headcorn showing post-medieval urban features

APPENDIX I: KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN – MAPPING OUT THE FUTURE: *DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPG 3) ON ARCHAEOLOGY IN HISTORIC TOWNS*

1. Introduction

1.1 The Extensive Urban Archaeological Survey, undertaken by Kent County Council, assesses the archaeological potential of the historic towns in Kent and Medway, particularly in relation to potential impacts from development. It constitutes draft supplementary planning guidance (as revised following consultation). Following adoption of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (KMSP) (anticipated in late 2005) this draft guidance will be taken forward as Supplementary Planning Guidance to KMSP Policy QL8 [Archaeological Sites] which sets out the requirements for the conservation and management of archaeological sites and finds. The draft KMSP and the draft supplementary guidance on archaeology (SPG3) were subject to full public consultation in late 2003. The draft supplementary planning guidance has been revised in the light of the responses received to that consultation. Policy QL8 is also the subject of a Proposed Change put forward in 2004 prior to the Structure Plan Examination in Public.

Policy QL8: Archaeological Sites

The archaeological and historic integrity of scheduled ancient monuments and other important archaeological sites, together with their settings, will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. Development which would adversely affect them will not normally be permitted.

Where important or potentially important archaeological remains may exist, developers will be required to arrange for archaeological assessment and/or field evaluation to be carried out in advance of the determination of planning applications.

Where the case for development affecting an archaeological site is accepted, the archaeological remains should be preserved in situ. Where preservation in situ is not possible or justified, appropriate provision for preservation by record will be required.

Source : Kent and Medway Structure Plan:Deposit Plan September 2003 as amended by Proposed Pre – Examination in Public Changes: June 2004

1.2 Precisely defining what is a town is not straightforward; for the purposes of this study, places that can be seen historically to have fulfilled roles as central places socially and economically, and perhaps with a market, have been included. Inevitably the distinction between village and town is not always clear. The Extensive Urban Archaeological Survey includes some medieval towns that are no longer of urban character and extends to towns which developed in the eighteenth century. Roman towns that now only survive as buried remains in a rural context are not included. The Guidance is concerned with the impact of development on archaeological remains within towns rather than sites in the surrounding countryside. In particular it seeks to raise awareness of areas of archaeological importance

within a town, provide more accurate information on the extent of these areas and establish a consistent approach towards dealing with the impact of development proposals across Kent and Medway¹. Canterbury and Dover have not been included in the Extensive Urban Archaeological Survey, as a more detailed Urban Archaeological Database is being developed for Canterbury and one is proposed for Dover.

1.3 The Guidance is aimed at local planning authorities, developers and their advisers. It may also be of interest to landowners, householders and local historical groups. Pending adoption of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, this Guidance amplifies Policy ENV18 of the adopted Kent Structure Plan 1996. Local Planning Authorities are encouraged to take the guidance into account in the preparation of their Local Plans/ Development Plan Documents and site specific Supplementary Planning Documents. The Guidance does not apply outside the identified urban areas and should be read alongside existing Local Plan policies on archaeology. The Guidance has been issued both as a Kent and Medway edition containing maps for all the settlements to which it applies and a district edition containing maps only for those settlements falling in the respective district area. There is no difference in the wording or application of the Guidance in either edition.

2. SPG Background

2.1 Kent's historic towns, some of which have been occupied since Roman times or even earlier, contain a wealth of evidence of past ways of life. This may take the form of buried archaeological deposits, standing buildings or structures, such as castles or town walls, or the present street patterns which may reflect past urban forms. At the same time, our towns need to develop as thriving communities. The Guidance aims to reduce conflict between the need for development and the need to preserve important archaeological remains, through the preparation of an ongoing and integrated strategy for conserving the urban archaeological resource.

2.2 The Government's policy on archaeological remains is set out in PPG16: Archaeology and Planning. It states (para. 6) that:

'Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite and non-renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. They can contain irreplaceable information about our past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.'

2.3 Archaeological remains are not always buried below ground and in many cases historic buildings within a town will contain important archaeological information, irrespective of whether they are Listed Buildings or not. Indeed, as noted in PPG15 (para. 2.15):

¹ Please note that Kent County Council provides an archaeological service for the Medway area on behalf of Medway Council.

‘Some historic buildings are scheduled ancient monuments, and many which are not scheduled are of intrinsic archaeological interest or stand on ground which contains’ archaeological remains.’

2.4 The means by which provision for archaeological preservation or recording is secured is also discussed in PPG16. In the event that archaeological work may be required prior to a planning decision being taken (para 21):

‘it is reasonable for the planning authority to request the prospective developer to arrange for an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out before any decision on the planning application is taken.’

If the planning authority is willing to grant planning permission but requires that preservation in-situ or archaeological recording take place (para 30):

‘it is open to them to do so by the use of a negative condition i.e. a condition prohibiting the carrying out of development until such time as works or other action, e.g. an excavation, have been carried out by a third party. ‘

3. Urban Archaeological Zones and Guidance

3.1 The Guidance relates to 46 towns in Kent and Medway as listed in Section 9. A plan has been produced for each town (for Headcorn here Figure 10) providing archaeological response zones based on the known importance of archaeological deposits in that town, which again derives from the Extensive Urban Archaeological Survey. The boundaries of these zones are related to the possible extent of archaeological deposits rather than modern boundaries. Key documents in assessing the archaeological potential of Kent’s towns are the Ordnance Surveyors’ Field Drawings of c. 1800 (held by the British Library). These provide consistent, fairly detailed cartography of the various towns before the population explosion of the 19th century. While they do not map the extent and layout of the towns in the medieval period, they nonetheless provide a useful baseline for assessing the extent and layout of the towns in the Middle Ages. In the case of applications for Listed Building Consent or where the building is historic in character, and where the proposal impacts on the historic fabric, then the Local Planning Authority will need to consider whether or not to consult the County Archaeologist in respect of considerations of archaeology or industrial archaeology. Similarly, developers considering proposals in these areas are encouraged to consult the County Archaeologist at an early stage in the design process. Four types of Urban Archaeological Zone have been identified although they will not necessarily be present in all the towns. The zones indicate:

Zone 1 – Areas of known national importance;

Zone 2 – Areas of known archaeological potential where clarification of the nature of this potential is required;

Zone 3 – Areas where archaeological potential is thought to be lower; and

Zone 4 – Areas in which archaeological remains have been completely removed.

Further information detailing the state of knowledge of the archaeology of each of these towns including analysis of their topography and historical development is available in the form of an

Assessment Report. These reports can be purchased from the County Archaeologist (see section 7 for contact details).

3.2 **Zone 1** identifies, as suggested in PPG16 (para 16), archaeological remains of known national importance, and comprises both Scheduled Monuments and unscheduled remains. PPG16 (para 8) states that:

'Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation.'

3.3 Scheduled Monuments (formerly known as Scheduled Ancient Monuments) are protected under Part 1 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, and prior consent from the Secretary of State is required for all works affecting such monuments, whether or not those works require planning permission. Local planning authorities should secure, through the development control process, the protection of nationally important remains that are not scheduled.

3.4 Development proposals within Zone 1 that are likely to affect nationally important archaeological remains whether scheduled or not, should include a detailed archaeological assessment of the remains and a mitigation strategy setting out how the remains will be protected. Buildings and foundations may need to be designed and/or located to allow preservation of archaeological remains. Such considerations should be addressed at an early stage in the design process, if possible before a planning application is actually submitted, in order to avoid unnecessary costs.

3.5 The archaeological and historic integrity of sites within Zone 1, together with their settings, should be protected and where possible enhanced. Where development would adversely affect them permission will normally be refused.

3.6 Where permission is granted, conditions will normally be applied, or agreements entered into, to ensure that any necessary mitigation strategy is implemented. Applications for planning permission and other consents that affect the fabric of historic buildings, or other historic structures or earthworks, and/or that disturb the ground, should be accompanied by the following:

- i.) a detailed report on the character and extent of any archaeological remains likely to be affected; and
- ii.) a mitigation strategy detailing how any possible archaeological impacts would be avoided.

3.7 **Zone 2** contains archaeological remains, some of which may be of national importance but whose precise extent, quality or level of importance is currently not clear, and where clarification of potential is required. Early consultation with the local planning authority, preferably prior to the submission of a planning application, will enable the implications of the proposals to be assessed, the appropriate course of action identified, and expensive redesign costs avoided.

3.8 The archaeological and historic integrity of sites within Zone 2, together with their settings, should be protected and where possible enhanced. Further information will be needed in this respect before informed decisions can be made. Therefore development proposals within Zone 2 that affect the historic fabric of buildings, or other historic structures or earthworks, and/or that disturb the ground, should be accompanied by a detailed report on the character and extent of any archaeological remains likely to be affected. Field evaluation may need to be carried out and the results made available prior to the determination of a planning application.

3.9 If significant archaeological remains are found to be affected by the proposals, preservation *in situ* of the remains will normally be sought. In some cases the need to preserve important archaeological remains may result in planning permission having to be refused. If permission is granted, a mitigation strategy detailing how preservation *in situ* is to be achieved should be submitted to and agreed with the local planning authority. Where preservation *in situ* is not justified appropriate provision for archaeological investigation, recording, analysis, publication and archiving will be required, in accordance with a written specification and timetable to be agreed with the local planning authority. Conditions will normally be applied to permissions or agreements sought to implement the mitigation strategy or programme of archaeological work.

3.10 **Zone 3** contains archaeological remains which on current evidence are of lesser importance. Development proposals within Zone 3 that affect the historic fabric of buildings, or other historic structures or earthworks, and/or that will disturb the ground should include provision for archaeological investigation, generally in the form of monitoring and/or borehole investigation, and the recording of finds and information of archaeological interest. If extensive or particularly important archaeological remains are unexpectedly encountered during the development process, there may be a need to arrange for their physical preservation and/or a more detailed programme of archaeological investigation and recording. Where permission is granted, conditions will normally be applied or agreements sought to implement the archaeological work.

3.11 **Zone 4** comprises areas where archaeological remains are known already to have been entirely removed by previous development, or other activity, including archaeological excavation. This Zone is only defined on the plan where it lies within the study area.

4. Outside the Urban Archaeological Zoned Area

4.1 Archaeological remains may be known or thought likely to exist outside the areas covered by the Extensive Urban Archaeological Survey and the Urban Archaeological Zones. Developers considering proposals in these areas are encouraged to consult the County Archaeologist at an early stage in the design process.

5. Updating of the Urban Archaeological Zones

5.1 As new archaeological and historical information concerning the historic towns becomes available, it may be necessary for the County Archaeologist in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority to revise the boundaries of the Urban Archaeological Zones.

6. Glossary of Terms

Scheduled Monument

Under the Ancient Monument and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of monuments, such monuments having statutory protection. Monuments on the schedule are by definition of national importance and the appropriateness of addition to the list is assessed against a set of criteria as set out in PPG16 Annex 4.

PPG15

Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (Department of the Environment and the Department of National Heritage 1994)

PPG16

Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (Department of the Environment 1990)

NB PPG15 and PPG16 are currently being revised and consolidated into a new Planning Policy Statement for the Historic Environment – PPS15

Assessment

This is normally a desk based activity bringing together all known evidence relating to the importance or potential of a given site or area.

Evaluation

This is normally supplementary work undertaken in the field (either non-intrusive such as fieldwalking or geophysical survey, or intrusive such as boreholing or trial trenching) to obtain further information on the character, extent, date and potential of a given site or area.

Mitigation

Archaeological mitigation aims to minimise the effects of proposed development and normally consists of either preservation *in situ* of the archaeological remains, and/or archaeological investigation, recording, publication and archiving, where preservation is not justified or possible.

7. Useful Addresses and Contacts

County Archaeologist
Heritage Conservation Group
Kent County Council
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XX
Tel: 01622-221541

English Heritage
Eastgate Court
195-205 High Street

Guildford
GU1 3EH
Tel: 01483 252038

8. List of Settlements to which draft SPG3 Applies

Appledore
Ashford
Charing
Chatham
Chilham
Cranbrook
Dartford
Deal
Edenbridge
Elham
Faversham
Folkestone
Fordwich
Gillingham
Goudhurst
Gravesend
Headcorn
Hythe
Ightham
Lenham
Lydd
Maidstone
Marden
Margate
Milton Regis
Minster in Thanet
New Romney
Northfleet
Queenborough
Ramsgate
Rochester
Sandwich
Sevenoaks
Sheerness
Sittingbourne
Smarden
Tenterden
Tonbridge
Tunbridge Wells
West Malling
Westerham
Whitstable
Wingham

Wrotham
Wye
Yalding

